

So to Charlie, we say once again, thank you for a job well done. We hope to see you around. We know we will, but just want you to know that your contributions to all of us, to our community, are deeply appreciated and will not be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, Tip O'Neill once said that all politics is local, and I rise today to honor the career of one of our nation's great local civic officials, Charlie Allebach, Jr.

Charlie has been serving the people of the Borough of Souderton, Pennsylvania, for almost 43—that's 43—years. He first became a borough councilman in 1964, and he was appointed mayor in 1970. He has been the mayor ever since, but he has just announced his retirement.

Charlie has presided over the steady growth of a wonderful community. He has also performed more than 2,400 marriage ceremonies, lent his time to local service organizations, and has been devoted to the Borough in every way.

On behalf of the people of the 15th Congressional District, I wish him the best during his retirement, and I ask that a copy of these remarks be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that Charlie Allebach, Jr.'s career as the mayor of Souderton, Pennsylvania, can be memorialized within the annals of Congress for all time.

Thank you, Charlie, for a job well done.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 45 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord our God, ever-faithful throughout the ages and seasons of life, the cold winds of January rob the memory of Washington's heat and stretch our longing for another spring.

And January 30 recalls for us, Lord, another distant memory. On this day in 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was killed by a young religious zealot. The personification of nonviolence was overcome by violence.

Lord, the voice of this "great soul," who spoke out in the midst of politics to end oppression and seek independence seems forgotten by us now, caught up in the war on terrorism.

In this mad spin around the sun, Lord, we cannot help but question whether we are an evolving world about to break upon the brightness of a new day or dissolving into the cold of Dante's darkness.

Raise up, O Lord, a prophetic light and lead us, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KAGEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KAGEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to plead for health care reform. In recent weeks, I have received more than 150 letters from my constituents asking for health care reform. No one has written expressing satisfaction over the current health care system. Most seniors feel that their medicine coverage is still costing too much. Others cite fear and losing access to choice of health insurance plans or medicines.

I am in favor of sweeping reforms to the system rather than the piecemeal and "quick-fix" methods of the past.

In Dallas, the poor, elderly and disabled are hurting the most when it comes to health care. Texas has the largest number of uninsured in the Nation, and our emergency rooms are bursting.

Madam Speaker, it is time for a new strategy. Let's consider comprehensive health care reform that will improve our health care system and make a real difference for Dallas and for America's citizens.

FEDERAL TIMBER POLICY SHATTERED HARNEY COUNTY'S ECONOMY

(Mr. WALDEN of Oregon asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Madam Speaker, the failure of Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act is another day with another broken promise.

When the Federal Government abruptly slashed timber harvest, the economy in Harney County, Oregon, population about 7,000, nearly collapsed. Hundreds of family-wage jobs were lost; 78 percent of the land mass in Harney County is controlled by the Federal Government so the govern-

ment's decision had a dramatic effect on the people who live there.

In 2000, Congress did the right thing by approving the county payments program which in Harney County supports roads, community services, and Burns High School where 60 percent of the student body takes vocational classes.

Take Jim Gibbon, a Burns High graduate and 4-year vocational classes participant. Through that learning, he is now co-owner of Burns Ford and they employ 20 people.

County Judge Steve Grasty says, "Loss of this program means losing future opportunities for young people here and in rural counties across America."

This Congress must keep the Federal Government's word to timber communities and pass H.R. 17. Time is running out.

RESTORING FISCAL SANITY

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, it is time we restore fiscal sanity to Washington. In 6 short years, Republican policies turned a \$5.6 trillion surplus into a \$3 trillion deficit. That is an \$8 trillion reversal of fortune.

And last year, congressional Republicans never came to an agreement on the budget and refused to pass nine of the 11 must-pass appropriations bills before adjourning in December. This isn't how the appropriations process is supposed to work, and the American people know it.

Democrats vow we are going to get things done and done on time. This year, Democrats brought much-needed reform to Congress by passing a rules package that require Democrats to pay-as-we-go. This isn't a new idea. From 1990 to 2002, Congresses and administrations of both parties abided by commonsense rules that stated you couldn't cut taxes and increase spending unless you paid for it. Pay-as-you-go was one of the main reasons Washington balanced the books in the 1990s.

This week, since Republicans were unable to do their job last year, Democrats will bring a final bill to the floor that will fund key priorities. This bill will allow us to move forward with fiscal sanity.

OPPOSE CONTINUING RESOLUTION

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today in objection to the so-called continuing resolution the Democrat leadership is going to bring up tomorrow. This is by no means a typical continuing resolution. A continuing resolution basically requires only a couple of lines saying that the current appropriations are continuing for a set period of time.